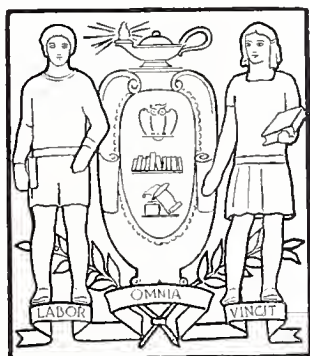




Pennsylvania Curriculum Studies

PARENT EDUCATION



A Manual of Suggestions to Aid
School Authorities in Developing a
Program of Parent—Pupil—Teacher
Relationships

BULLETIN 86

1935



PENNSYLVANIA'S EDUCATIONAL CHARTER

FOR EVERY CHILD in Pennsylvania protection of his constitutional right to an education.

* * * * *

FOR EVERY CHILD an understanding, competent teacher.

* * * * *

FOR EVERY CHILD an adaptable educational program—instruction and practice in how to become a competent citizen—training and guidance to do some part of the world's work well—activities for the development of worthy home membership, wise use of leisure time, health, culture, and character.

* * * * *

FOR EVERY CHILD a school term sufficient in length to enable him to profit to the full extent of his capacities from opportunities offered by education.

* * * * *

FOR EVERY CHILD safe, sanitary, hygienic, and properly equipped school buildings and grounds.

* * * * *

FOR EVERY CITIZEN of the Commonwealth provision for a continuing education—to make up for opportunities lost in earlier years and to provide means whereby the individual may adjust himself to new civic, social, and economic responsibilities.

PARENTS IN A CHANGING WORLD

PARENT EDUCATION is a voluntary movement in the field of adult education which is primarily concerned with people as parents.

It has developed because of the insistent demands of parents for assistance. Parents and leaders cooperating together acquire appreciations and gain perspectives which contribute to their understanding and enjoyment of life, and to more satisfying family and community relationships.

In its wider aspect Parent Education is concerned with four rather distinct phases, including:

Organized groups and classes of adults, usually called parent education groups;

Education of children and youth for family living, including activities in the nursery school and elementary school, new courses and units in the curriculums of junior and senior high schools, colleges and vocational schools, projects, and new programs with parent-education emphasis for out-of-school youth; and programs with parent education emphasis in already going organizations for young people;

Professional education of teachers and prospective teachers, nurses, social workers, librarians, ministers and others in child development, family relationships and the conduct of parent education;

Marriage and family counselling service for youth and adults.

The scope of parent education is broad. It includes a rich variety of opportunities for parents to grow in the function of parenthood through discussion and counselling.

The activities of parent education include parent discussion groups, public meetings and forums on subjects of interest to parents, the organization of cooperative family projects in art, music, drama, handicraft, recreation; participation in work of social and recreational agencies, directed observation of children at home, in school and in play groups; wider use of public agencies as resources for families needing special kinds of help; the display of educational exhibits and use of demonstrations; individual conferences on questions relating to child development and family life; wider use of community resources for recreation and education, and the use of the parent education specialist in many related professional fields.

The methods of parent education are informal and adapted to the needs of the individual and the group. They are concerned with the possibilities of providing for emotional growth, and with giving the individual leads which will enable him to work through his own problems.

The outcomes of parent education may be measured in terms of more satisfying relationships between parent and parent, parent and child, child and child, parent and teacher, and teacher and child. In its final analysis parent education may be expected to lead to enriched living and more satisfying family and community life.

JAMES N. RULE

Superintendent of Public Instruction

April 2, 1935.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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EVERY CHILD, WHATEVER HIS AGE, HAS A RIGHT TO BE UNDERSTOOD

PARENT EDUCATION

Part I

BEGINNINGS OF ORGANIZED PARENT EDUCATION

ONLY WITHIN recent years parent education activities have been organized as an integral part of educational programs. School administrators and executives of agencies interested in the welfare of parents and children have become alert to the need and desire of parents for specific education for the functions of parenthood and to their own responsibilities in providing such educational opportunities for parents. They are coming to the realization that of all educational institutions the home is probably the most potent and permanent source of influence in the life of the child. Parents *are* "educators" whether they will or not. Therefore it is doubly essential that they be adequately equipped for the tremendous educational responsibilities which devolve upon them.

ORIGINS OF PARENT EDUCATION

The parent education movement originated in parents' efforts to help themselves. For over a century small groups of parents have met together here and there to increase their own knowledge of child rearing both through exchange of experiences, through the reading and discussion of pertinent written materials, and by utilizing such expert guidance as was available. Further stimulation was derived through the early studies of children carried on by G. Stanley Hall, in which the parents' aid was enlisted in the collection of data, and more recently by the systematic and more carefully controlled investigations undertaken by child development research centers.

Out of such informal but interested groups of mothers as those referred to above, grew the two national organizations now known as the Child Study Association of America and the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, both of which have been actively promoting and carrying on groups for the study of family life and parenthood for more than forty years.

Early in the 1890's the Association of College Alumnae, now the American Association of University Women, began a systematic study of children through its college-bred mothers. At the beginning of the second decade of the twentieth century, it launched an adult education program, the purpose of which was "to give its members a more scientific understanding of children from birth through adolescence and to help improve methods of dealing with children in homes and in schools."

Recognizing the importance of the intangible aspects of family life, the American Home Economics Association has maintained a field representative in Parent Education over a period of years.

Many other national organizations whose major interests are health, social hygiene, mental hygiene, or religious education, and which have

always educated parents informally through conferences, have in recent years consciously developed parent education as one phase of their programs.

All of these organizations prepare and distribute materials and give professional assistance and supervision upon request.

STATE DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION

During the last decade several types of state programs have developed under governmental auspices. In many states classes have been inaugurated with the help of state appropriations administered by the State Department of Vocational Education.

In 1926 California organized a Bureau of Child Study and Parent Education within the Division of Adult Education of the State Department of Education. This was made possible by a special grant of money from a foundation.

In Ohio a coordinated state program was developed under the joint auspices of Ohio State University and the State Department of Education.

Since 1928 New York's State Department of Education has had a Child Development and Parent Education Bureau which "aids in developing and integrating the work of institutions and agencies throughout the State." This Bureau was first established under private funds but was later taken over by the Department when the State Legislature appropriated funds.

In thirty-three states which have included parent education activities in the adult and nursery education aspects of their emergency education programs, state supervisors have been designated to direct these activities, sometimes on a full-time basis, and in other cases combining the supervision of parent education with that of other phases of these emergency programs.

INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING

State wide programs in parent education are being carried on through county and home demonstration agents and state extension workers under the auspices of the land grant colleges. At present there are thirteen parent education specialists employed on Cooperative Extension staffs in the United States. Their work involves a program of parent education for rural parents.

Many colleges and universities (including several of the land grant colleges) have established centers in Child Development and Parent Education where research is carried on and professional training in these fields is offered. In addition, courses for parents are offered through the extension and correspondence departments of many of these institutions. The Merrill-Palmer School of Homemaking at Detroit, has also been a recognized leader in the fields of research and training.

In Pennsylvania beginnings have been made in the development of Parent Education courses and activities in connection with Temple University, University of Pennsylvania, University of Pittsburgh, Drexel Institute, State College and Bucknell University. Other institutions have made beginnings or are planning activities in this work.

Temple University in connection with the Department of Early Childhood and Elementary Education has planned for an integration

of activities relating to child development and family living. Nursery Schools are maintained in connection with courses at Temple University, Pittsburgh University, Drexel Institute and State College. The Frick Training School, under the Board of Education, conducts a Nursery School which is used as a part of the observation program for the training of teachers in Pittsburgh.

In connection with the Emergency Program, Nursery Schools were organized at State Teachers College in California, State Teachers College in Indiana and State Teachers College in Shippensburg, Pennsylvania.

Parent Education activities have been conducted in connection with these Nursery Schools.

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PARENT EDUCATION

Because of the many varied types of parent education programs which sprang into existence, professional workers in the field soon felt the need of an agency which would attempt to coordinate and harmonize the points of view and efforts of all groups and which would serve as a clearing house of research and general information. The first of a series of conferences, out of which the National Council of Parent Education grew, was held in 1925. The Council was incorporated in 1928.

This agency conducts biennial national conferences for professional workers in parent education, counsels with individuals upon request, and carries on experiments and demonstrations cooperatively with other agencies. It publishes *Parent Education*, a service bulletin for professionals.

At present the Council is composed of about 40 member organizations and 500 professional individual members. It functions through a governing board made up of 12 representatives of member organizations and 3 representatives of the body of individual members, and an executive director and assisting staff. It derives its support to some extent from membership fees and sale of publications, but it is maintained largely through foundation funds.

WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON CHILD HEALTH AND PROTECTION

The movement received further stimulation as a result of the White House Conference on Child Health and Protection held in November, 1930, at which over 4,000 specialists from various fields bearing upon the welfare of the child and family met to discuss the present status and extent of scientific knowledge in all aspects of child development. In the section of its report which is devoted to the study of the family the following statement appears:

“In view of the responsibilities and obligations being laid upon the family as the primary agency for child health and protection, as revealed by the recommendations of the various sub-committees of the White House Conference, this Committee strongly recommends that various educational associations and organizations and the educational departments of the different states be requested to study the possibilities for organizing parent education as part of the system of public instruction, and that the professional groups and organizations concerned with children

also be asked to 'study their opportunities and obligations for parent education.'

Furthermore, Article XI of the Children's Charter carries further explicit reference to the need of specific training for the responsibilities of parenthood and the right of parents to expect educational assistance of this type; to quote:

"Article XI—For every child such teaching and training as will prepare him for successful parenthood, homemaking and the rights of citizenship; and for parents supplementary training to fit them to deal wisely with the problems of parenthood."

PARENT EDUCATION IN PENNSYLVANIA

Parent education programs in local communities are being carried on under the auspices of public school systems, by subdivisions of state and national agencies, and by locally organized private agencies.



FATHERS AND MOTHERS MEET TOGETHER IN A PARENT EDUCATION GROUP

In many communities where several such agencies are doing educational work with parents, services and information are exchanged and joint enterprises are conducted on a cooperative basis through the organization of a coordinating agency or council.

The Parents Council of Philadelphia was organized in 1925 through the interest and efforts of a group of parents, teachers, social workers and physicians. Although this organization has been abandoned due to lack of funds, representatives of organizations and agencies conducting parent education activities are meeting together occasionally to discuss the need for parent education in Philadelphia and how these organizations can work together to meet this need.

As a result of a survey of the Pittsburgh district made by the National Mental Hygiene Committee, the Pittsburgh Mental Hygiene

Society was organized in 1930. The Parent Education Committee of this society was formed soon after and was sponsored by thirty co-operating social and educational agencies. Later when the program of the Mental Hygiene Committee was discontinued, the Parent Education Committee changed its name to the Pittsburgh Council of Parent Education with an individual paid membership basis.

Numerous other organizations in the State include parent education in their programs. In response to the demand of local Parent-Teacher Associations of the State, the Pennsylvania Congress of Parents and Teachers in 1928 published a series of pamphlets¹ outlining a four year program in parent education. Bucknell University in Lewisburg has an Institute of Family Relationships. The Department of the American Home of the State Federation of Pennsylvania Women in co-operation with Dickinson College in Carlisle has conducted an annual five day School of Family Relationships since 1933. Thiel College in Greenville had its first Parenthood Institute in November, 1934.

As early as 1928 the State Department of Public Instruction called a conference on Parent Education. A committee met three or four times after this conference to discuss possibilities of developing a program of Parent Education. In June 1931 the Superintendent of Public Instruction appointed a commission for the study of educational problems in Pennsylvania. The most pressing problems were classified and committees formed for the study of each problem. A parent education sub-committee of the extension education committee was appointed to appraise current parent education programs and activities, to study the needs and the objectives of parent education and to formulate ways and means of promoting, organizing, harmonizing and continuing parent education. The following were members of this committee:

Martin Chworowsky, Doctor Clarence A. Patten, A. W. Castle, Mrs. Anna G. Green, Mrs. Laura S. Greenwood, Miss Emma Johnson, Mrs. Alice F. Kiernan, Mrs. Mulford Stough, Mrs. Saul Lavine, Miss Helen Purcell, Herbert Spencer, Ralph P. Bridgman, Doctor Frank H. Reiter.

The sub-committee on parent education met for the first time January 5, 1933. At this meeting it was decided to call a conference on May 16th of organizations and agencies engaged in parent education activities for a general appraisalment of parent education in the State. The organization representatives attending the conference suggested that the sub-committee on parental education outline a state-wide program to be presented at another conference to be held in October, 1933.

The second conference of the parental education committee and representatives of organizations in the State engaged in parent education met in the Education Building, Harrisburg, October 18 and 19, 1933, at which time reports were submitted. This meeting culminated in the consummation of the Council for Parental Education in Pennsylvania with Doctor James N. Rule as the executive director. The Council was formed for the purpose of coordinating parent education activities in the State. An executive committee of nine members and an executive secretary were also authorized. The following were elected to serve as members of the executive committee: Mr. Martin

¹Education in Parenthood, Pennsylvania Congress of Parents and Teachers, Year I—Home Background, Year II—The Pre-School Age, Year III—The School Child, and Year IV—The Adolescent Youth.

Chworowsky, Pittsburgh; Miss Emma Johnson, Philadelphia; Mrs. Alice F. Kiernan, Philadelphia; Mrs. Alice Liveright, Harrisburg; Mrs. Mulford Stough, Carlisle; Doctor Mary Riggs Noble, Harrisburg; Doctor Albert Lindsay Rowland, Shippensburg; Doctor Earl Rudisill, Greenville; Doctor Herbert Spencer, Pittsburgh; and Doctor Frank H. Reiter, Executive Secretary, Harrisburg.

The Pennsylvania Council of Parental Education met again on January 9, 1934. The meeting was attended by representatives of over 30 organizations who decided that the Council should become a permanent organization and authorized a committee to draw up a constitution. Plans were made for undertaking several definite projects, among which were the development of leadership training centers in connection with institutions of higher learning and cooperation with the director of the emergency program in all its phases.

Parent Education in Pennsylvania has received added impetus during the past eighteen months through the Emergency Education programs conducted by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration. Since January, 1934 when Parent Education became a part of this educational program Pennsylvania has extended its parent education activities. It has been possible to provide more group leaders in the State as well as to conduct a program of leadership training. Doctor Muriel Brown has said "there is abundant evidence that participation in the emergency parent education activities has helped parents and teachers in many communities to think more clearly, more independently and more effectively about child development, human relations, about homemaking and family life."¹ This program has received the generous assistance and support of agencies and organizations throughout the Commonwealth.

CURRENT TRENDS

More and more it is being recognized that educators have a responsibility for providing professional leadership and for furthering the coordination of parent education activities in their communities. The job of the school is only half done when it has educated the children of the nation. Since it has been demonstrated beyond doubt that the home environment and the role played by understanding parents are paramount in the determination of what the child is to become, it follows that helping the parent to feel more adequate for his task is fully as important from the point of view of public education and the welfare of society as is the education of the children themselves. Moreover, an educated parenthood facilitates the task of the schools and insures the success of its educational program with the child.

Many leaders of present-day thought, concerned with the tremendous social problems confronting civilization, are beginning to regard an enlightened, thoughtful parenthood as one effective instrument for social reconstruction. Parent education, therefore, is rapidly becoming accepted as a public opportunity and a public responsibility.

It is impossible to estimate accurately the number of parents reached by the many types of programs indicated above. Parents in study groups alone probably number more than 700,000 at the present time, while countless more are contacted through radio series, printed pamphlets, public lectures, magazine and newspaper articles. The

¹ Parent Education Blazes New Trails. *Parents Magazine*, April, 1935.

distribution of one pamphlet alone, *Infant Care*, published by the United States Children's Bureau, has exceeded the 8,000,000 mark.

In Pennsylvania, the number of parents enrolled in study groups has approximated 25,000.

Questionnaire returns for 1933-34 from about half of the 20,731 units of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, reported a total of 5,894 parent education study groups. The Vocational Education Division of the Office of Education reports that in eight states alone membership in parent education classes rose from 1,000 to 13,000 in one decade. The American Association of University Women reports 1,859 parent education study groups served in 7 years. It has been estimated that about 60,000 parents are being reached through the emergency education programs. Many other organizations report significant growth in numbers of parents reached by their programs.

Part II

WHAT IS PARENT EDUCATION?

IN TERMS OF ITS DEVELOPMENT

PARENT EDUCATION may be said to have originated as a voluntary cooperative movement on the part of parents out of their awareness of the increasing complexity of living in a rapidly changing society, and their consequent desire to be put in touch with scientific interpretations of child rearing and family relationships.

As a phase of organized education it has received guidance and stimulation from a rapidly increasing group of specialists and professional workers in parent education who have helped to formulate policies, discover needs, gather information, carry on research, and undertake experimental projects. In connection with these professional activities, a wealth of pertinent written material, both popularized and technical in form, has been developed for distribution and publication. This material is being constantly modified and extended as a result of experiments and research studies which are being carried on.

The characteristics of parent education in respect to method, content, leadership, organization and administration, are therefore directly traceable to these two contributory influences; on the one hand, the motivation, needs, desires, and experiential knowledge of parents themselves, and, on the other hand, the goals as set up by professionals plus their background of more expert and scientific information.

IN RELATION TO OTHER FIELDS

Parent education may be described as that area of adult education which is primarily concerned with education for family life and parenthood. According to one authority, it is one of five distinguishable functional divisions into which offerings in the field of adult education may be grouped, the others being the remedial, occupational, political, and cultural phases of adult education.

Educational activities leading to the improvement of family relationships were definitely organized in response to demands made upon educators by parents and because of the specialized nature of the subject matter pertaining to child development, family relationships and community relationships. Another causal factor was the recognition of the need for an extremely flexible administrative policy with reference to conditions under which parent groups meet.

Many types of agencies and services organized to meet the needs of parents and children have developed educational relationships with parents as one phase of their programs. This does not signify, however, that parent education is identical with social work, recreation, health work and other branches of education such as homemaking and pre-school education, although all of these welfare and educational services frequently find that they achieve their purposes more fully by consciously including in their programs educational activities for parents.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Parent education is chiefly concerned with helping parents to think constructively about their own situations, to solve their every day problems with increasing confidence and satisfaction, and in general to gain insight into their own behavior and that of their children. The objectives most commonly stated may be grouped as follows:

1. To aid parents to interpret the findings of specialists in regard to various aspects of child and family life.
2. To give parents an opportunity to modify or change their attitudes toward their children and their behavior.
3. To serve as a device for personal adjustment.
4. To give an opportunity to consider civic problems affecting family living, and the relation of these problems to social and economic life in the community.
5. To provide a forum in which parents may verbalize their conceptions of the mores and attempt to adapt them to present conditions and trends.
6. To help develop a better understanding of the functions and purposes of education of various types, and needs for these services.¹

WHO IS SERVED

Learning how to adjust human relationships to family living, a process which is continuous throughout life, is not to be thought of solely in terms of intelligence, of age level, or of socio-economic status. Parent education recognizes that the problems of parent-parent and parent-child relationships vary surprisingly little with individuals and families of different intelligence and socio-economic status. The same range of perplexities and the needs for help are shown by college graduates and persons with a meagre educational background. Not only parents themselves but also professionals who work with children and families, such as nurses, doctors, social workers, teachers in training, teachers in service, psychologists and librarians are seeking to become more effective in their work through increased insight into child development and family relationships.

In general, therefore, parent education seeks to meet the needs of parents, parent substitutes, and others concerned with family life. It takes into account the fact that family relationships are not static; that they are continuously changing as individuals within the family group change and as children become increasingly mature, and it seeks to further understand and adjust to these successive stages of maturity through the adoption of a dynamic concept of human relationships.

IN TERMS OF OUTCOMES

Parent education programs, effectively administered, should be a factor in helping to bring about the following conditions:

Parents—

who have keener insight into human relationships and deeper appreciation of the art of family living;

¹For further discussion of objectives, see Witmer, Helen, "The Field of Parent Education:" A Survey from the Viewpoint of Research. Parent Education Monograph I. New York National Council of Parent Education. 1934.

who have the ability to apply such knowledge in their relationships with others;
who are able to participate more intelligently and with greater satisfaction to themselves in all phases of community life.

Children—

who have wider opportunities to develop their total personalities by reason of a more satisfactory adjustment to home, school and the community;
who have developed the capacity to formulate satisfying and reliable personal standards in a flexible and changing social order;
who are continually stimulated to seek new knowledge and worthwhile experiences;
who have developed the ability to translate such knowledge and experience into practices which will enhance their own welfare and that of society in general.

Homes—

which are organized on successively higher levels of integration, mutual helpfulness and understanding, so that the fullest possible development of the individual members is assured.

Communities—

whose organizations function more adequately for the benefit of those who live there;
whose members take responsibility for community planning and the maintenance of standards in respect to education, health, character, and recreation.

SUMMARY

Parent education is that area of adult education which is primarily concerned with education for family life and parenthood. It aims to give parents and others who deal with children, such as teachers, social workers, librarians, and nurses, increased insight into the fundamental principles underlying child development and satisfying family relationships and the relationship of the individual and the family in regard to social and economic forces.

AS OTHERS DEFINE PARENT EDUCATION

"Parent Education is a voluntary cooperative effort on the part of parents studying under qualified leadership to increase their understanding of child growth and development, of parent-child relationships, of family life, and of family-community relationships, and to improve their ability to perform their parts in these relationships with confidence and satisfaction."—(*Memorandum of Policies for the Organization and Leadership of Parent Education Activities within Emergency Education Programs. July 25, 1934*)

"Meaning of Parent Education. Parent Education is an organized effort to help parents understand themselves and their children as individuals, the inter-relationships within the family, and community influences affecting these relationships, as well as the implications for family living of social, civic, and economic forces. Parent education lends itself to either individual or group treatment.

"To help children and youth arrive at similar understandings may also be included in the term parent education, but such extension of the term is not used in the memorandum."—*Suggested by a special committee for a Memorandum on the Coordination of Parent Education Activities through Voluntary Inter-agency Cooperation.*

"Parent education is education in preparation for more efficient control of the influence affecting family life (human relationships), and is intended primarily for parents and others interested in children."—*The University of the State of New York, State Education Department, "Child Development and Parental Education," Report of Third Annual New York State Conference on Child Development and Parental Education.* November 28-29, 1932, Albany, New York, p. 8.

"Parent education is a means by which all the problems facing family life are brought into conscious consideration, traditions are evaluated in the light of present-day living, and new techniques and methods of adjustments are evolved."—*White House Conference 1930, Committee Reports, "The Family and Parent Education,"* New York: Century Co., Section III—Committee A, p. 149.

"* * * the entire problem of family existence needs to be rethought in terms of the new society which science and the technologies are bringing into being * * * parents everywhere are beginning to realize that they need a particular kind of skill, a specific body of knowledge, to enable them to maintain the integrity of family-life within a fluid society."—*Lindeman, E. C., "Parent Education as a Social Movement," First Yearbook, 1930, Washington, D. C. National Congress of Parents and Teachers, p. 12.*

"Parent Education is a field of *teaching, research, and service* looking toward the better functioning of parents and the better understanding of the child in the family, and of parent-child relationships, as well as the study of adult learning, and the psycho-sociological factors of parent-parent, husband-wife relationships. The content of Parent Education is derived from many subject matter fields, such as sociology, psychology, health, nutrition, education, anatomy, anthropology, economics, and household technology."—"Report of First New York State Parent Education Conference, 1930." Albany, New York, State Department of Education.

"Parent education * * * implies educational help in the continuous meeting of every new problem, in the continuous adjustment to a changing social world, in the continuous development of attitudes and philosophies in relation to other human beings. Parent education thus cuts across our emotions and our entire scheme of values, as well as across our arts and sciences."—*Gruenberg, S. M. Parent Education and Child Welfare in America. "Parent Education," White House Conference on Child Health and Protection.* New York: Century Co., 1932, p. 16.

Part III

SPECIALISTS AND LEADERS IN PARENT EDUCATION

ONE OF THE most important tasks facing the administrator is the selection of a parent education specialist to direct the program. The qualifications of the person to be chosen for or assigned to this work should be considered in relation to his duties and responsibilities.

DUTIES OF THE PARENT EDUCATION SPECIALIST

The duties of the specialist vary according to the local situations. In general the functions of the parent education specialist may be grouped under the following headings:

- (1) organizing a program of parent education;
- (2) training and supervising group leaders;
- (3) establishing community relationships;
- (4) counselling with individuals;
- (5) furthering the coordination of all educational activities for parents;
- (6) preparing materials;
- (7) developing experimental or demonstration projects;
- (8) offering professional courses in child development and parent education, and
- (9) stimulating and carrying on research activities.

In some instances regular staff members have performed some of these functions, in other cases specialists have been employed to devote full time to the program.

The relative distribution of emphasis among these possible functions is determined by such factors as the needs of existing groups in the community, opportunities presented for action, significance of the functions in terms of permanent educational returns to the program, and the qualifications of the parent education specialist.

GENERAL QUALIFICATIONS OF SPECIALISTS AND LEADERS

In the selection of parent education specialists persons of superior training and of high professional standing should be sought. Experience has shown, however, that academic training is secondary in importance to certain other qualifications and types of experience which are essential to the establishment of successful relationships in the community. Essential qualifications of parent education leaders, regardless of academic background, include knowledge of community organization, sound attitudes toward parents, and understanding of the processes of group discussion, an adequate philosophy of adult education, fundamental experiences with children, an acquaintance with reliable sources of information, and the ability to work harmoniously with other people.

ACADEMIC TRAINING OF THE PARENT EDUCATION SPECIALIST

It is obviously impossible for any one person to be expert in all phases of knowledge involved in an understanding of child develop-

ment, home management, child guidance, and home and community relationships. As might be expected, therefore, the background and training of parent education specialists differ widely.¹ Specialists have been variously drawn from the fields of education, home economics, sociology, psychology, and medicine. Whatever the individual's field of specialization, however, it is desirable that his basic preparation include orientation in the field of psychology, education, sociology, biology, physiology, and nutrition, and if possible, some work in the creative arts.

The specialized training of parent education workers includes courses in the physical, mental and social development of the child, mental hygiene, the family, history and methods in parent education, nursery school techniques, and such field work requirements as directed observation of study groups for adults and supervised leadership of such groups; directed observation of children in nursery school laboratories, on playgrounds and in family situations, participation in nursery schools and in behavior clinics; and occasionally experience in family social case work. Some training in the case work approach has been strongly urged of late in connection with the responsibilities of parent educators for counselling individual parents.

HOW THE SPECIALIST TRAINS LEADERS

Experience has shown that it is desirable for persons selected for leadership training to have a background of first-hand experience with children, and to have participated in study groups. Those leading groups must also have the time and energy to attend the leadership training classes and to study in preparation for meeting their groups. In communities where no leadership training facilities are available, leaders may plan to attend summer training institutes which are organized with the help of college or university staffs.

The results of one study² made on leadership show that leaders themselves believe that a knowledge of parent-child relationships, skill in conducting group discussion and an understanding of how to get along with people are the most important factors affecting their success as leaders.

The specialist bases the plan for training leaders on the functions of the leaders in their groups as well as their own needs. Training situations are set up which are similar to those confronting leaders in their own groups. The situation approach, through group discussion, is therefore, the commonly accepted method of procedure in leadership training. Any content introduced grows out of the discussion and is related to the life experiences of the leaders in order that they may have an opportunity to experience a situation similar to that in their own groups. Leadership training includes an opportunity for leaders to learn how to make suitable preparation for group meetings based on an attempt to understand the nature of personality

¹A report to the White House Conference indicated that two-thirds of the persons directly responsible for national, state, community and university programs were doctors of philosophy, usually in psychology education, or child development. About two-thirds of those carrying on other important parent education projects and those associated with the leaders described above held masters' degrees. Of the remainder, the majority held the bachelor's degree, while a few were registered nurses. (For further information, see *Parent Education*—White House Conference, pp. 307 ff.)

²Hick, A. and Hayes, M. *Study of Lay Leaders*, State Teachers College, Albany, New York, 1933.

growth and adult learning. Consideration is given to methods of discovering and using interests of the group members. The leaders learn where to find authoritative source materials, as well as to consider the use of human resources in their work.

The general purposes of leadership training have been stated as follows:¹

1. To orient prospective parent education leaders in the history and principles of adult education and in the nature of adult learning.
2. To acquaint them with and help them use the educational opportunities for adults in adult education programs.
3. To acquaint them with the history of the parent education movement and with current trends.
4. To help them clarify their ideas about child growth and development and about human relationships.
5. To help them learn how to lead parent discussion groups, and talk educationally with individual parents, when asked to do so.
6. To put them in touch with resources for parent education, so that they may know where to find stimulating, authoritative material for themselves and for the members of their groups.

An important function in the training of leaders is involved in helping the leaders to feel confident in assuming the responsibilities of group leadership.

The in-service type of training is considered most valuable to leaders. In cases where leaders have had no opportunity to participate as group members in parent discussion groups, it is particularly helpful to have a pre-service training period in the nature of orientation. Experience has shown that in-service training which parallels group leadership in a continuing program is the most satisfactory.

RECRUITING STUDY GROUP LEADERS

The terms "worker" or "leader" are usually applied to the parent educator in preference to the more conventional word "teacher." The reason for the preferred terminology is implicit in the methods, purposes, and underlying philosophy of parent education.

Since the duration of the study group and regularity of attendance depend upon the interest of group members, it is evident that the selection of capable leaders is essential to successful group organization.

Practices vary with respect to study group leadership. In some instances all groups are led by parent education specialists; in other programs the director may secure the assistance of professional workers in other fields (teaching, nursing, social work, etc.) who are qualified and sufficiently interested to lead a few groups of parents under the supervision of the director. Another practice which is widespread at the present time is the utilization of members of various community groups (usually mothers) as group leaders. These leaders are usually members of a parent education group for a period before they become group leaders. When they are selected for group leadership, they

¹ "Suggestions for the Preparation of Leaders for Parent Education Groups in Emergency Education Programs"—Federal Emergency Relief Administration, Educational Division, Parent Education Office, Washington, D. C.

enroll in leadership training courses under a parent education specialist.

The practice of recruiting group leaders from the community has many advantages from the educational viewpoint. Through the training of leaders, the benefits of the program can be extended to large numbers of parents without necessitating an increase in the budget. Furthermore, experience and the results of leadership studies indicate that many parents feel freer to express themselves in the presence of a leader who is one of their own number, and who more nearly resembles them in experience and in educational, economic and social background. By enlisting the interest of a large body of leaders, the level of community interest and standards of work along parent education lines are being continuously raised. And finally, training received in this connection is frequently transferred to other phases of community activity.

Potential leaders are recruited in many different ways. Often they are people who are experienced in other types of community leadership, and who have been encouraged to take leadership training by agencies, school principals, club presidents, and officers of P. T. A.'s. Frequently study groups choose their leaders from among their own number. The study group leader through experience in a particular group, may suggest certain individuals for further training. Other individuals who have become interested in parent education voluntarily join leadership training courses in order to increase their own insight into parent-child relationships and to be able to make a contribution to the general welfare of the community.

These leaders may or may not have a background of technical training in the fields of education, health, psychology, sociology, or homemaking. Frequently, however, they prove to be persons who, prior to marriage, were teachers, nurses, social workers, or librarians, and who find in parent education an opportunity to utilize their professional training and to make new and interesting educational contacts. Studies have shown that they are likely to be persons with at least a high school education and in addition have frequently attended colleges.

QUALIFICATIONS OF LEADERS

Qualifications listed by a conference of professional parent education workers as essential to successful group leadership included a feeling of security (dependent upon an adequate philosophy, training and experience); sensitivity of the leaders to the problems of the group; insight with respect to one's own difficulties; flexibility in meeting and working with people; balanced personality; health; and intellectual interest in harmony with the group.

It is advantageous for leaders to know the social, economic, racial and religious background of the parents with whom they are dealing as well as their capacity to learn. They should have an understanding of the particular community in which they are working and its standards, traditions, attitudes and sentiments in respect to current affairs.

The successful leader appears to be distinguished by willingness to begin at the present level of thinking of the group on the specific problems under consideration; a sympathy with the parents' point of view; and awareness of the importance of the emotions, as well as the intellectual factors in the learning process; a tolerance of other peo-

ples' views; an understanding of the dangers of responding to the group's desire to be told rather than to be led to think things through for themselves.

Satisfying progress is facilitated where the persons selected to act as leaders are motivated by a real interest in possibilities of growth for themselves and for the group members; rather than by the desire to exercise control or to exploit the situation for purposes of self-aggrandizement.

It is evident that the distinction between the parent education specialist and the non-professional leaders is not clear-cut either in terms of qualifications or functions. Both may have a background of professional training in some special field. Both may perform functions in connection with organizing and conducting groups, publicizing the program, and in helping to promote and coordinate parent education activities in the community. Both presumably are practised in leading adult discussions; and both have had experience with children. The specialist, however, because of specialized training is able to assume the responsibility of interpreting scientific information and of training group leaders.

THE LEADER'S ATTITUDES TOWARD THE GROUP

There is probably no one factor upon which the success of group experience depends as much as it depends upon the attitudes of the leader toward the group. The individual leader will find herself using all the information she possesses, all her ability to appreciate the attitudes of other persons, as she works along in their interest. She will find her group members responding to her personal qualities even more directly than they respond to evidence of her professional knowledge and skill.

It is obviously impossible to write a set of rules for anything as dynamic as this leader-group relationship. It has been found, however, that some or all of the following attitudes are more or less characteristic of many successful leaders:

1. Friendliness with the members of the group. This feeling of friendliness may be expressed by asking tactfully about some member of the family, responding with interest when individual group members seem to want a little chat. It is conveyed by a leisurely manner before and after the meeting, a friendly greeting, a cheerful goodbye.
2. An open-minded and considerate attitude toward every contribution from the members of the group.
3. Generosity in the interpretation of parental attitudes and practices. Most parents are conscientious. Although they may not take care of, or manage their children according to the most up-to-date methods, *they usually behave as they do because they feel it is best.*
4. A desire to build up the confidence of parents in themselves. Parents have had so many of their failures pointed out to them that they are frequently self-conscious. The leader can do a great deal to restore this confidence by calling attention to things they have done well, or making them feel that they have something to contribute to other members of the group.
5. Sympathy for, and a willingness to listen to, the troubles of group members, however trivial these may seem. They are important to the parents, and may be indicative of other things which are important to the leader.
6. An equal awareness of, and concern for, the unexpressed feelings of parents. Learning can be blocked for long periods of time by doubts, fear, suspicions, which never find their way into words unless someone brings them out.

7. A willingness to learn from parents. Professional people may know a great deal about many children and about the ways in which they respond to certain kinds of management and behavior. Parents, on the other hand, always know a few children more intimately, because they have long and wide experience with them under home conditions.

8. Patience. The leader should neither expect too much nor too immediate improvement in parent-child relationships as a result of parent groups. She should always remember that the process of re-education involves the dropping off of habits long established, the surrender of beliefs sometimes held very dear. Knowing this, she will do everything she can to help parents translate new insights into practice with feelings of security and self-acceptance.

9. Feelings of modesty and caution in attempting to answer the questions asked or help with the problems described by parents in connection with the group work. The leader is simply a "middle man"—a person in a position to make available to parents the best that specialists have discovered about certain phases of growth, development and human adjustment. She does her best to translate this technical information into lay language, but she does not, and should not be expected to know everything about children and adults.

10. A willingness to make a real effort—sacrifice if need be—to learn more than she already knows about parent education, and to acquire proficiency in the teaching processes characteristic of adult education. Very few persons are "born" leaders in the sense that they naturally possess the skill and understanding to guide groups in such a way that the group experience will have vitality and meaning. Most successful leaders have behind them a record of long study and intensive application."¹

LEADERS OF STUDY GROUPS

In addition to the "teacher-leaders" who act as discussion chairmen of the study groups, several other types of leaders may assist in the various details of group organization. These "action-leaders" function in connection with various group activities, such as organizing the group, notifying members of meetings, keeping records of group discussions, distributing books and other reading materials, and in general helping to stimulate and maintain interest in group meetings on the part of members. It is desirable that all of these types of leaders, as well as the discussion leader and the "alternate" or "associate" leader, be members of the leadership training class. Because of their greater experience in group discussion, such persons are helpful to the discussion leader in forming nuclei around which the process of group thinking develops.

THE PARENT EDUCATION SPECIALIST IN THE STATE PROGRAM

The function of a Parent Education specialist in the Department of Public Instruction is to stimulate the development of parent education programs and facilities in communities and educational institutions throughout the State, to build and uphold standards, and to seek to integrate and coordinate the work carried on by many and various types of organizations. The specialist also performs many specific functions, such as training and supervising leaders; preparing, publishing and distributing materials, arranging for and participating in state and regional parent education institutes; giving lectures and radio talks;

¹ *Handbook for Leaders of Parent Education Groups in Emergency Education Programs*, published by the National Council of Parent Education in cooperation with the Office of Education, United States Department of the Interior (p. 31.)

organizing and giving courses at the college and post graduate level; serving on state and national committees; developing experimental and demonstration programs within the State; stimulating and conducting research studies. The specialist also integrates the parent education program with the work of other state educational divisions and services to parents and children. It is also the function of the parent education specialist in a state department to devise means to acquaint school superintendents and principals with the values inherent in educational work with parents. Because of a broad viewpoint growing out of contacts with many different types of programs, state parent education specialists are in a position to help bring about coordination of effort on the part of various agencies in parent education activities.

In some states directors or supervisors of parent education are also located in land grant colleges in connection with the cooperative extension programs, and also in the Vocational Home Economics program.

NATIONAL WORKERS IN PARENT EDUCATION

Specialists in parent education attached to staffs of national organizations prepare and distribute written materials to workers in the field; advise local units or branches relative to the development of their individual programs; help local workers organize and conduct leadership training institutes; participate in parent education conferences planned to stimulate interest in local and regional programs; make studies of the status and needs of parent education programs carried on by local units and affiliated branches; organize and participate in series of radio broadcasts on national hook-ups; develop co-operative experiments and demonstrations within their organization programs; counsel with individual workers relative to such matters as plans for training, opportunities for placement, and related activities.

SUMMARY

In selecting persons to work with parents, academic training is secondary in importance to other qualifications such as a knowledge of community organizations, an understanding of adult learning processes and human relationships, experience with children and the ability to work with others.

An important consideration in the program is the selection of a parent education specialist whose responsibility involves the organization of the program. The training of specialists varies but includes certain parent education emphases. Organizing and conducting study groups, and the training of leaders are among the most important functions of the work. Potential leaders may be recruited from many different sources, and may be either professional or non-professional. The professional parent education worker, because of specialized training and experience, is able to take the responsibility for training leaders, and for evaluating and interpreting scientific material.

Group leaders who are most successful have a feeling of confidence; are sensitive to group problems; are able to analyze both individual and group problems, and have the flexibility needed to meet and work with people. Personally they have good health and intellectual interests in harmony with the groups with whom they work.

Part IV

ORGANIZING AND ADMINISTERING A PARENT EDUCATION PROGRAM

EFFECTIVENESS of a parent education program conducted under the auspices of the public school system depends upon the degree to which existing local resources are utilized in its development. This implies active cooperation and sympathetic understanding on the part of many agencies and groups of individuals in the community.

WHO IS INTERESTED

It has been found that teachers, nurses, social workers, librarians, extension workers, doctors, and ministers, as well as parents, have needs to be met by such a program as well as distinct contributions to make to it. Members of these and other professions may assist in initiating the program; they may also participate in study groups, or after some training, act as leaders of them.

Not only school administrators and classroom teachers, but also various specialized departments of the public school system, particularly the adult education, homemaking, social sciences, guidance, psychological, and visiting teacher divisions, may give assistance and support to the parent education program.

Then too, local units of national organizations which have included parent education in their programs and hence have developed procedures and materials in response to the needs and interests of their groups, may cooperate in helping to discover potential leaders, in setting up joint leadership training courses, in organizing groups, and in sponsoring parent education institutes to acquaint the public with the aims of the program.

Institutions of higher learning are in a position to contribute to the program by furnishing speakers on special topics, and by offering specialized courses in child development and parent education, and in related subjects such as education, psychology, sociology, biology, and household arts for leaders in service as well as for students in training.

Workers whose concern is the welfare of the family and who realize that effective welfare work shares some of the objectives and aims of adult education in family life, organizations interested in problems of dependent and delinquent children, and recreational agencies may lend their support to the program.

As one of the important agencies of adult education the library performs services in connection with supplying books to groups and individuals, and in counselling parents with reference to suitable reading materials to meet their particular needs.

How set up a parent education program in such a way as to challenge the interest, meet the needs, and enlist the cooperation of the many groups referred to above? Situations vary widely, and therefore initial plans will necessarily differ to some extent according to locality.

INITIATION OF THE PROGRAM

In small communities where there are relatively few organized agencies, it frequently happens that one or two parents interested in the possibilities of parent education form the nucleus around which a program is built up in the community. These parents may take the responsibility of interesting others, of forming a study group, and of securing a leader for the group. The latter may come from another community or better still, may be chosen by the group to take leadership training under the direction of a parent education specialist in a nearby community or under the auspices of the county or state extension worker. Acting as community organizers, this small nucleus of interested individuals may also make arrangements for a place in which to meet, for books and other needed materials.

In larger communities where interest has been stimulated by parents' organizations, a superintendent may consider it feasible and desirable to initiate a program in connection with the public school system. As a first step he may wish to call together representatives of agencies or groups having a potential interest in the proposed program. Such organizations would include social welfare agencies, health education organizations, churches, libraries and various branches of educational agencies both for adults and children. Each representative may be asked to speak informally on the work being done by the organization or group which he represents, so that all present may get a picture of what is being done in the locality. This may be followed by a general discussion of community needs which are not being adequately met by existing programs, and of the relation of the proposed project to these needs and to the organizations and groups represented at the meeting.

The list of organizations and agencies to be found in the appendix of this bulletin is suggestive of the number and variety of agencies interested in parent education in Pennsylvania.

COOPERATIVE PLANNING OF ACTIVITIES ON A COMMUNITY BASIS

A tentative draft issued by the National Council of Parent Education, "Cooperative Planning of Parent Education Activities on a Community Basis," says:

"The manner and degree in which parent education activities may be planned cooperatively vary from community to community. In some cases an occasional conference of a few leaders seems to be sufficient. In other cases representatives of agencies carrying on or interested in parent education meet regularly and plan increasingly coordinated programs, with a view to developing a community-wide cooperative approach in which many agencies share in mutually planned enterprises.

NEED FOR COOPERATION AND MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING

"Many national organizations, through their branches and subdivisions are sponsoring, carrying on, or serving as counsellors on programs of parent education which vary according to locality. There are also various unaffiliated local organizations functioning in these ways. Frequently in communities and states there are therefore many agencies conducting parent education activities. For instance, in a single community, parent education programs may be carried on simultaneously by such organizations as the public school system,

parent-teacher associations, extension workers affiliated with the state land grant college, the local college and university alumnae groups, public health nurses, social service agencies, public libraries, and often also in connection with private nursery schools, churches, and clubs.

"In such situations the following sorts of questions naturally arise: What is the relationship between these agencies and groups? To what degree does each understand not only the work but the goals and philosophy of the others? Is there a duplication of effort in certain respects? Are there functional or geographical areas not covered which could be provided for by mutual planning? To what degree do all of the agencies pool energy and resources in such a way as to insure the greater development of each participating group and the consistent effectiveness and enrichment of the parent education activities that are offered to the community?

"An even more basic reason for community coordination in parent education is the need of parents themselves for a unified program. In the ordinary course of daily events, most mothers and fathers participate in a variety of different parent education activities, and as community members, are identified with various organized groups whose activities influence family life. Overlapping in services and apparent inconsistencies in points of view easily cause misunderstandings, resentments and confusions of thought which may seriously retard the total effectiveness of parent education in the community.

COOPERATIVE FUNCTIONS

"Reports from many communities indicate that such functions as the following may be undertaken cooperatively by groups. They may

1. Interpret parent education in the community.
2. Facilitate the exchange of information among agencies with reference to their respective programs of parent education.
3. Discover areas in the community not reached and needs not provided for by existing programs.
4. Consider with all participating agencies possible new developments aimed at meeting these needs.
5. Facilitate agreements among participating agencies as to the types of services which each shall undertake in the community (such as lectures, study groups, individual guidance, and library services.)
6. Sponsor experimental or temporary programs, such as the emergency education program.
7. Discover and assist in developing teacher-leaders and other types of community leaders.
8. By mutual agreement, take administrative responsibility for joint enterprises such as institutes and leadership training courses.
9. Serve as counsellors upon request to agencies desiring help in the development of their parent education programs.

INITIATION OF COOPERATIVE PLANNING

"Problems involved in the initial stages of cooperative endeavor deserve special consideration. The most successful coordinating groups seem to be those which come together for the immediate purpose either of discussing common problems or needs, or of undertaking a joint community project. Frequently the need for a coordinated program first becomes apparent with reference to the latter. Two or more agencies, working on the same problem want to think it through together. Several agencies—the church, the school, the parent-teacher

association, the family welfare agency, perhaps—wishing to ‘do something’ about ‘an obtrusive problem’ such as juvenile delinquency or unwholesome types of amusement decide to approach the problem through the parents. The fact that these agencies are seeking to realize a common specific purpose through parent education procedure, tends to insure the success of efforts at coordination. As long as attention is centered upon a task which obviously can best be undertaken on a community basis, the coordinating process will go forward.

It also seems to be desirable for the individual who takes the major responsibility for promoting cooperation to be a person who has the respect and confidence of the agencies being brought together. It is usually unwise to rely on social or political prestige to effect coordination in a professional field. Sometimes, although not always, a state or local department of education has been the agency selected to assume leadership in sponsoring meetings of the coordinating group, since as a public service of relative permanence and long standing the impartiality of its position is likely to be accepted by other members of the group.

In cases where groups have cooperated most successfully, the agency initiating the program has regarded its function as that of calling others together to plan rather than to assent to a plan. This does not eliminate the necessity of carefully working out in advance a program or agenda for the conduct of the meeting. Many busy people have had the unfortunate experience of meeting with so-called coordinating committees which never got beyond the point of asking ‘Why are we here?’ ‘What are we supposed to do?’”

PUBLIC RELATIONS

The extent to which a local parent education program is publicized depends on many factors. In some communities little publicity will be given to the work until certain aspects have developed on a functioning basis. It is a cardinal principle in parent education that a minimum of organization machinery should be developed and that the community should not be stimulated beyond its capacity to participate and work with the program. Objectives and plans should be developed which are feasible and obtainable for the cooperating groups. The principal function of any program of public relationships is the development of fundamental understandings necessary for a sound program of parent education.

There are various media for disseminating knowledge as to the program and its values. The types most frequently utilized are:

1. Institutes or conferences—1-3 days.
2. Exhibits—in connection with fairs, meetings and in stores.
3. Speeches, panel discussions or demonstration discussion groups before various local organizations, such as P.T.A., A.A.U.W., service clubs, fraternal and church groups, professional groups of school principals, teachers, doctors, nurses, etc.
4. Newspaper publicity consisting of prepared articles and reports of interviews.
5. Radio talks.
6. Neighborhood canvas. Women in different neighborhoods who are members of one or another of the cooperating organizations may be enlisted to interest their friends, either casually or directly, in coming to hear about parent education.

It is essential that interest in the community should not be aroused to the point where the program cannot meet the demands placed upon it. It has been a common experience in communities undertaking parent education to find that groups tend to evolve faster than do trained leaders for such groups. This means either that requests for leaders cannot be met or that poorly qualified leaders must be used, both of which situations tend to be detrimental to the permanent success of the program.

HOW WORKERS ARE OBTAINED

The school administrator has several options in securing a parent education specialist. If he is in a position to add a full-time, professionally qualified leader to his staff, he may apply to a recognized training center of a college or university,¹ or he may consult the Information Service of the National Council of Parent Education.

He may utilize one of his own teachers who has had special training to qualify her for this work, or he may select a teacher from his system with the right type of personality and background and arrange for her to take a year of graduate preparation in parent education.

Perhaps in his community there is available a well trained person who has had experience in conducting groups sponsored by a national organization, who would be interested in taking some additional training in order to qualify as a professional.

Where he wishes to initiate such a program and is unable to arrange for a full-time worker at once, the superintendent sometimes assigns a nursery school teacher, kindergarten teacher, homemaking teacher, extension teacher, guidance counsellor or health teacher to do part-time work with parents.

Leaders who participate in the program by acting as chairmen of discussion groups and as group organizers may serve in a voluntary capacity without pay. Many parent educators believe that this policy insures a better feeling in the groups and greater educational growth for group members as a whole. The Parent Education leaders in the Emergency Parent Education program are approved in the Department of Public Instruction in Harrisburg and receive compensation at the regular rates for emergency education teachers.

Parent education programs under public auspices are administered in various ways, determined in part by the source from which financial support is derived. They exist as separate divisions or bureaus within departments of public instruction; they may be incorporated as aspects of health, vocational home economics, adult or emergency education programs; or they may be administered in connection with the extension programs of land grant colleges.

Other matters which need to be considered in connection with the development of the parent education program include provision for secretarial assistance, office space, books and materials, and laboratory facilities.

It is desirable that the parent education office be centrally located so that it is easily accessible from all parts of the community. It has been found advantageous to have an adjoining classroom for leader-

¹As for instance: University of California, University of Cincinnati, Columbia University, Cornell University, State University of Iowa, Merrill-Palmer School, University of Minnesota, University of Toronto.

ship training classes, equipped with tables, chairs, and book shelves for a parents' library. It is also important that there be free parking space for cars either adjacent to the building or within easy walking distance.

Nursery schools staffed by professionally trained workers are frequently utilized as laboratories in connection with leadership training courses, and as observation centers for parents and other interested members in the community. In many instances, staffs of emergency nursery schools themselves carrying on parent education activities, have offered the use of these nursery schools for observation purposes in connection with other programs of parent education. In lieu of a regular nursery school set-up, organized playgroups for young children, supervised by volunteers or mothers who have had special training in the pre-school field, have sometimes served as acceptable substitutes for purposes of observation and participation.

Occasionally mothers are prevented from attending study groups because they cannot make suitable arrangements for the care of children under school age at home or at the house of a neighbor. Under such conditions it may be advisable for the leader to arrange for a small playgroup under the supervision of a mother or student, in some other room in the building in which the study group is meeting. Precautions need to be taken to see to it that no child be permitted to enter such a group who has a nasal discharge or other symptoms of incipient illness. If possible, the school nurse or a nearby physician should examine all children each time that they are brought to the group in order to safeguard the group from possible sources of contagion.

BUDGET

It is evident that a comparatively modest budget will suffice to support a parent education program particularly one in which volunteer leaders are utilized in conducting study groups.

The main items to be covered are the salary of the professional worker or workers, the cost of clerical assistance, an allowance for supplies and for the initial purchase of a small library of useful books and pamphlets in the field, sufficient funds for subscriptions to several current magazines both of a popular and technical nature, and funds to provide for the addition of new publications from time to time.

The values accruing from such a program in terms of services rendered to parents, children, the home, the school and the community are entirely incommensurate with the small financial outlay.

FINANCING THE PROGRAM

The parent education program may be financed in several ways:

1. It may be provided for in the regular school budget by employing the parent education specialist as a member of the school staff. The parent educator may be employed in the following capacities:

- a. Member of the Extension Education staff in the program of Extension Education.
- b. Member of the Home Economics Department of the school.
- c. Member of the Vocational Home Economics staff in the Home Economics Evening School classes.
- d. A guidance counsellor who is also assigned to home and school relationships problems.

- e. A school nurse who in addition to being a registered nurse has had training in parent education.
2. It may be possible in larger communities to secure the appointment of a parent education supervisor by applying to the local Emergency Education Council, or the County Supervisor of Emergency Education.
3. Private funds may be secured for financing a parent education program over a limited period of time with the understanding that when it has proven its value, its support will be assumed by the Board of Education as a part of its regular budget.
4. Funds contributed locally may be matched by the Board of Education for the support of a whole or part-time professional worker in the schools. Frequently a professional worker from a local or state institution or a national organization may assist in developing a community program until sufficient interest has been aroused to warrant asking a Board of Education to appropriate funds for the program.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

Since the passage of the Common School Act of 1834 establishing free public education for the children of this Commonwealth the extent of the state's responsibility for education has increased. Comparatively recent developments have indicated the responsibility of the state for education from infancy through adulthood. The present school code specifies:

"Any board of school directors may admit persons less than six years of age, or more than twenty-one years of age, to suitable special or vocational schools or departments."¹

It is evident, then, that parent education as a special phase of education for adults is a responsibility of the State although little has been done to fulfil this obligation. Other sections of the school code provide for parent education in the school program.²

RECORDS

The professional leader keeps careful and detailed records of various aspects of the program and renders reports as requested by the superintendent of schools or the administrator.

Record-keeping demanded of group leaders is simplified as much as possible. For administrative purposes, however, the following are usually required from each group: (1) a record of group attendance; (2) registration blanks giving information about group members; (3) a record of questions discussed in the meetings.³

EVALUATION

Numerous criteria for judging the success of parent education programs have been suggested. Obviously, attempts to gauge results by means of rigid examinations and subject matter tests are out of place in the type of adult education which aims to help the individual meet his everyday problems with increasing confidence and satisfaction. Such factors, however, as per cent of attendance, increasing responses from group members, requests for additional groups, spontaneous reports of parents as to results, objective evidence of improvements in the community (such as better recreational facilities,

¹ School Laws of Pennsylvania, Article XIX, Section 1906.

² School Laws of Pennsylvania, Article XLI, Section 4102.

³ For suggested forms for record-keeping see *Handbook for Leaders of Parent Education Groups in Emergency Education Programs*, p. 43.

disappearance of gangs, etc.), records of meetings, reports of home projects and reading done, evidences of changed attitudes and practices in the home, increased cooperation between home and school, may all point to the actual effectiveness of the parent education program.¹

SUMMARY

Organizing a program of parent education implies the active cooperation of many agencies and groups of individuals in the community. Programs seem to be successful in proportion as responsibility for their organization and development is shared mutually by those initiating the program, and those served. Organizing study groups and other activities to meet the needs of parents constitutes the most important part of such a program.

Parent education programs are variously administered and financed under public auspices. A program serving the needs of the community may be organized on a cooperative basis with a comparatively modest budget. Values accruing are demonstrable in relation to children, parents, homes, and the community in general.

A PARENT EDUCATION PROGRAM DEVELOPED UNDER A SCHOOL SYSTEM

Community program, (local or county) Parent Education developed in connection with school program (1)² under direction of supervising principal or superintendent.

Community agencies (2), Schools, Organizations cooperating individually or as part of a unified plan to improve family relationships and family community living.

Specialist in Parent Education (3) responsible for organizing leadership training and relating community resources to program.

- (a) Leaders (4) conducting study groups;
- (b) Professional groups (5), social workers, recreation leaders, nurses, physicians and other professional groups participating in program;
- (c) General Adult Education program (6);
- (d) Community effort in family community living for children and youth (7).

Parents (8) of the community, organized in study groups as part of already going programs, or as new groups where necessary.

FUNCTIONS OF VARIOUS GROUPS

1. **SCHOOL PROGRAM**—Includes parochial and private schools. Part of general adult education and extension service in the community. Respon-

¹ For a more extended discussion on evaluating parent education, cf. Witmer, Helen L., *The Field of Parent Education: A Survey from the Viewpoint of Research*, pp. 67-79.

² See "Functions of Various Groups," pp. 32-33.

sible for administration of program. Stimulates cooperative planning, employs specialists, provides meeting places.

2. **COMMUNITY AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS**—Interpret parent education, develop cooperative enterprises and facilitate exchange of information regarding program.
3. **PARENT EDUCATION SPECIALIST**—Organizes and supervises, trains leaders, furthers coordination of educational activities for parents, stimulates cooperative community relationships, offers professional courses, prepares materials, conducts demonstration projects.
4. **STUDY GROUP LEADERS**—Learn interest of group members, conduct individual conferences, attend leader training courses, plan other activities for group needs.
5. **PROFESSIONAL GROUPS**—Interpret parent education, stimulate interest, assist in group organization, refer interested clients to program, may request professional courses.
6. **GENERAL ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAM**—Integrates parent education in total program, organizes parent groups and offers variety of services to interested groups.
7. **COMMUNITY EFFORT FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS**—Introduces related material in elementary schools and colleges, plans discussion groups on question of interest in daily living.
8. **PARENTS**—Organize discussion groups and related activities, participate in discussion, assist in interpretation of parent education in community, request services needed for children and adults in community.

Part V

ACTIVITIES, CONTEST AND METHOD

PARENT EDUCATION is chiefly concerned with helping parents to think constructively about their own situations, to solve their everyday problems with increasing confidence, to gain insight in their own behavior and that of their children, and to incorporate insight into behavior with feelings of assurance. It does not, therefore, consist in giving "courses" to parents, nor in transmitting to them a large mass of logically related content, facts or material. Nor does it aim at telling parents how to bring up their children. Neither is it a question of teaching skills, such as cooking, sewing or the care of infants, although all of these technics may need to be acquired incidentally in the process of becoming an efficient parent.

The emotional aspect of the learning process is recognized as a factor which may be equally potent in contributing to or preventing the growth of the individual. To provide opportunity for emotional growth on the part of parents is accordingly of paramount importance rather than the inculcation of factual knowledge.

Parent education deals with life situations. The very fact that many of these center around family relationships is enough to indicate that the emotional factors involved are exceedingly important in any consideration of the learning processes. The amount of factual knowledge acquired is relatively insignificant.

The process which goes on within the group is, consequently, not one of handing forth and absorbing subject matter. It is not a process of finding solutions to problems. The sharing of experience, the exchange of viewpoints, the consideration of differing opinions and reactions, all dealing with vital questions, under the guidance of a tactful leader, contribute to the growth process within the individual. As a result, parents come to view their situations more objectively and learn to work through their own problems more effectively. "It is worth while to see that others have the same or similar problems, to feel a sense of assurance in being like them, and to begin to feel freer while talking to each other."¹ Since growth is a process which goes on within and not external to the individual, the group leader's responsibility ends with providing an opportunity for growth, and does not include purveying facts.

In consideration of such a process as the above, there is no division between content and method. Abstract theoretical courses and textbooks, conclusive statements and indoctrination have no part in a group method which deals with dynamic growth processes. Content arises out of and relates to the immediate needs in the group situation. The discussions are based on and grow out of interests and the needs of the individual group, as expressed by the members. Various phases of parent-child relationships, questions regarding the physical, mental, emotional and social development of children's behavior, home-school relationships, the effect of socio-economic pressure upon the family are the general areas around which discussions are most frequently developed.

As the educative process continues, it usually happens that parents

¹How to Lead Discussion—A Guide for the Use of Group Leaders by Leroy C. Bowman, p. 19.

who have considered the child's behavior as unrelated to themselves, begin to see it in relation to demands put upon the child by the total environmental situation. The development of the parent as a person is therefore brought into focus, as well as his relationship to the child and the interaction between the community and the home.

PARENT EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

Three principal means of carrying on parent education may be distinguished: group meetings, individual counselling, and activities in which parents "learn by doing." In some organizations projects involving "learning by doing" are carried on only as supplements to the parent study groups and are considered as laboratory experiences. In others, these activities in which parents learn by doing may even precede any organized study groups, with a view to meeting the needs and interests of the group. In Pennsylvania there is a definite attempt to recognize the fact that emotional re-education may take place in many ways. The type of activity selected by the parent depends on his own needs and interests. A fundamental principle of adult education is found applicable in this respect,—begin with the interest of the group. Experience in a diversified program of parent education has shown that activities which bring about a wholesome emotional release are particularly valuable in times where economic and social pressure is intense. In other words, conducting activities which have practical mental hygiene value rather than talking about mental hygiene is frequently more helpful and more needed among many parents at the present time. The program is parent-centered rather than subject-centered. A brief description of such parent education activities follows.

PARENT STUDY GROUPS

Group thinking through the use of discussion is the procedure most widely used in conducting parent study groups. The discussion group is usually composed of a small number of members with a somewhat similar background. Each member participates in the on-going thought processes of the group, on the basis of his own experiences and reading. The leader stimulates discussion, guides it but does not dominate or direct it. The leader may suggest sources of information when an impasse is reached. "The leader's job is to learn the chief interests of members, if possible before discussions; to start discussions; to keep them going; to be ready to repeat main points of the issues as discussed; to turn the discussion one way or another. He starts things, keeps them going, and winds them up, but does not do them."¹

An important element in conducting discussions has to do with the physical arrangement of the room. Participation is furthered by a pleasant room, not too large, with comfortable chairs arranged so that all members of the group can see each other. It is helpful to have chairs arranged in a circle preferably around tables.

Mr. Bowman gives some very pertinent suggestions for conducting an effective discussion:

¹ "How to Lead Discussion—A Guide for the Use of Group Leaders" by LeRoy C. Bowman, p. 10.

"General Rules for the conduct of a meeting. * * * Be informal. First, all discussion is informal. Greetings, personal remarks, jokes are all very much in order as long as they are brief and quite incidental."¹

"Make the group responsible. A second rule that is in a sense the key to the whole secret of discussion leadership is this: responsibility for everything that is done should be put on the group, as far as time and circumstances permit, and the members should learn that they as a group are doing whatever is done."²

"Not only is the group responsible for conclusions, but increasingly, as the members learn the discussion method, they become responsible for the way in which the meetings are conducted."³

"Ask questions. The third rule which a leader should always keep in mind is that his chief task is to ask questions."⁴

"Everyone participate. The fourth rule is related to what has just been said: in general everyone should participate in the discussion."⁵

"Point out progress in discussion. The fifth general rule is that at the appropriate places, when the discussion has centered around one topic long enough or agreement has been reached or there seems to be a tendency to go off on another track, the leader should try to show the group how far they have come in discussion and to lead toward the next logical step."⁶

"* * * utter frankness is desirable at all times. Any appearance of sliding over facts, or hesitancy to deal with prejudices of the members or with dangerous subjects such as sex or radicalism, is fatal to hopes of real progress."⁷

"Lastly, fear of the expression of deep emotion in a discussion group is a false fear. * * * In fact a high ideal for any discussion group is to help its members so to understand themselves that a happier emotional tone is established in the group and they themselves become, if need be, better balanced emotionally."⁸

PUBLIC MEETINGS AND FORUMS

Lectures, preferably followed by a discussion period are introduced occasionally as supplementary devices to convey certain types of technical or scientific information or to bring to parents the stimulus of inspiration given by an outside speaker. The passivity of the listeners (in contrast to their more active participation in discussion groups) and the difficulty of following unfamiliar material constitute objections to the widespread use of this method.

The forum is adapted to large gatherings of people. In this method the speaker delivers a speech, prepared in advance, which is then followed by discussion from the floor. This method has been found useful in communities where large groups of people are called together for the first time to consider questions of interest to parents. This method was pursued at the Institute of Parenthood at Thiel College in November, 1934. Where sufficient interest is stimulated by discussion, groups frequently are formed as a result of such meetings. Institutes and conferences in the nature of forums for parents are conducted yearly by the Pittsburgh Council of Parent Education, the Women's Interdenominational Union of Philadelphia, and the Lehigh Valley Child Helping Conference, as well as by many Parent-Teacher Units and State Teachers Colleges in Pennsylvania.

The panel method, which is a derivative of the discussion method, is used when discussion would be cumbersome owing to the size of the group, or difficult to get started. Seated at a table, a few experts

¹ "How to Lead Discussion—A Guide for the Use of Group Leaders" by LeRoy C. Bowman, p. 15.

² Ibid p. 15.

³ Ibid p. 16.

⁴ Ibid p. 16.

⁵ Ibid p. 17.

⁶ Ibid p. 18.

⁷ Ibid p. 30.

⁸ Ibid p. 31.

without formal preparation discuss among themselves the topic assigned, usually for one hour. During the second hour, the discussion is thrown open to members of the audience.

Many parent discussion groups grow out of the study of the needs and purposes of education. For a study of general problems in education such bulletins as the following are helpful:

53—The Kindergarten as a Part of School Life—1930

61—Tentative Course of Study in Health Instruction for Secondary Schools—1931

81—Cumulative Pupil Personnel Records for Elementary and Secondary Schools—1933

One Hundred Years of Free Public Schools in Pennsylvania 1834-1934 ¹

PARENTAL PARTICIPATION IN WORK OF COMMUNITY AGENCIES

The participation of parents in the work conducted by community agencies is a worth while parent education activity. It is a "learning by doing" approach. In such agencies and organizations as health clinics, nursery schools, rural schools, 4H Clubs, Boy and Girl Scouts, Camp Fire Girls, Girl Reserves, religious groups, and many others, there is a great need for workers. In some instances it is possible to arrange for parents to assist staff workers in their program. In clinics there are always the problems of keeping records, and assisting the specialists and staff workers. In the nursery school parents assist in making and repairing equipment, helping with routine procedures and providing materials. The rural school is frequently limited because of the fact that one or two teachers must adapt their program to the needs of children of widely varying ages and capacities. Many rural teachers welcome the assistance of parents in extra-curricular activities. The need for leadership and assistance in the youth organizations is most urgent. All of these needs provide opportunity for actual participation by parents. The participation becomes more valuable where there is an opportunity to discuss the experiences with the staff worker and parent education leader.

The parent education leader can make the necessary arrangements for such participation with the various agencies willing to cooperate, although it is a policy which might well be discussed by a group of representatives of all parent education organizations in the community.

DIRECTED OBSERVATION OF CHILDREN

A Parent Education activity which is of value in clarifying questions regarding children consists in the observation of children in nursery schools, play groups, private and public schools, boys' and girls' clubs, play grounds, and in home situations. Some one has said that a Japanese interne who was responsible for conducting visitors through a marine hospital remarked to his commander: "Many look but few see." Parents have found it helpful to work out with the group leader before hand some suggestions for observation in order that they may study certain aspects of behavior in particular. It is

¹ These bulletins may be obtained by writing to the Department of Public Instruction, Harrisburg.



OBSERVATION IN THE NURSERY SCHOOL IS A WORTH-WHILE PARENT EDUCATION ACTIVITY

valuable for members to report and discuss observations in group meetings. Such observations stimulate interesting discussion regarding the causes of children's behavior and the methods of dealing with children. Through such observations in the nursery school, parents have an opportunity to observe techniques of trained persons in handling children, and to study child reactions brought about by such techniques. Opportunity is afforded to study children's reactions to each other, as well as to view children's behavior objectively.

INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCES

Group members who want individual help on some problem the discussion of which would not be particularly valuable for the group as a whole, may receive counsel in informal conference with the leader preceding or following the meeting, or they may make a definite appointment for a conference at some other time. Counselling on the part of the leader consists in assisting the parent to see his problem in perspective and in the light of certain broad fundamental principles, and perhaps in recommending certain helpful readings. If the need of a more specific type of assistance seems indicated, the parent may be referred to a specialist equipped to give advice in relation to the particular problem presented.

Certain agencies conduct parent education whose staffs are composed of specialists who carry on their programs almost wholly on the basis of individual conferences between the specialist and the parent. Examples of such agencies are the Pittsburgh Child Guidance Center, the Philadelphia Child Guidance Clinic and the Philadelphia Marriage Counsel.

FAMILY PROJECTS

Family projects are cooperative undertakings on the part of the family as a whole. There is a wide variety of possibilities in such projects. Examples are map making, camp cooking, weaving, photography, music and gardening. In one city, one family represented in a parent education group became interested in family visitations to the museum and park. These cooperative projects often serve as a means of bringing adults and children into closer and more satisfying relationships. One requisite is that the project shall be suited to the interests of all members of the family group, and that each member participate in it according to his ability and capacity. In one family a particular evening was set aside for family recreation and when the younger members were small, it was necessary to select recreational occupation of interest and suitable to the ability of the children. In such a family project as gardening, it is to be expected that the younger members cannot put forth the continued effort and energy of the older members, but they will be increasingly interested if they may carry responsibility each on his own level.

There is a wide possibility in the stimulation and development of the cooperative family projects. It is possible to provide for culminating activities of such projects in the way of exhibits of tangible outcomes, organized and directed by the families involved.

EXHIBITS

Exhibits serve not only as visual aids in parent education but also offer excellent opportunity for working together on a project on the part of members of a parents' group. Exhibits may interest and help to create public opinion if they are well presented. The Parents Council of Pittsburgh used this means of interesting the public in children's toys, clothing and books at a leading department store. Lectures on these subjects were presented by experts. Perhaps no other organization has done more along the line of exhibits of constructive toys for children than the American Association of University Women.

The Exhibits displayed by Departments of Vocational Home Economics and Agriculture at various county fairs in Pennsylvania, as well as the State Farm Show in Harrisburg, are examples of means of helping parents to know more about activities in which their children participate in school.

It is possible to obtain prepared exhibits from some national organizations such as the Bureau of Home Economics, Department of Agriculture in Washington, D. C., and from certain departments of Child Development in Universities.

DEMONSTRATIONS, DRAMATIZATIONS AND MOVING PICTURES

Closely related to the exhibit is the demonstration which is particularly valuable to groups that are interested in learning processes or skills which can be illustrated in this manner. As an example it has been found that prospective parent group leaders find it most helpful to observe experienced leaders conduct their group discussions. Demonstrations of family recreational activities have proved of interest to parents. The Home Economics Extension Service has used demonstrations effectively in its program with rural people. The parent education leader may call on various specialists within the community who are trained in giving demonstrations of interest to parents. The person who gives the demonstration will find it helpful to know what the interests of the group members are in order to make her suggestions more pertinent.

Very recently a parent discussion group in a Pennsylvania city decided to stage a play illustrating certain phases of family relationships.

Moving pictures have not been used very extensively in Parent Education. The Gesell films are probably the best known among films of child growth and development. These films are both in silent and sound versions. One parent study group was unable to find a suitable film, so the group members made a moving picture film of their own.

Although still in the experimental stage, the use of moving pictures in parent education offers possibilities in the silent versions, and more particularly, in the sound films. A difficulty presented for many groups is that of finding suitable facilities and surroundings for showing the films.

RADIO PROGRAMS

In some communities radio programs have been arranged for listening groups of parents as well as for individual parents. In

some cases the leader of each group is supplied in advance with a copy of the talk and suggested questions and reading lists. After the broadcast there is discussion of the questions and the material presented. Group members also suggest questions regarding which they would like further help. In some instances radio broadcasts are published and distributed after their presentation. Parent Education radio programs are broadcast by the Child Development Institute of the University of Minnesota, the Child Welfare Research Station of the State University of Iowa, and the New Jersey Congress of Parents and Teachers in cooperation with the Cooperative Extension Department of Rutgers University.

The Pittsburgh Counsel of Parent Education broadcast a series of radio dramas of family life. The Scranton Council of Parents and Teachers, the Dauphin-West Shore Parent Teachers Council and various others throughout the State have conducted broadcasts on subjects of interest to parents.

CORRESPONDENCE COURSES:

Correspondence courses in parent education have not been widely developed due, in part, to the fact that life situations are made much more vital as a part of discussion under qualified leadership.

There are two types of correspondence courses, those prepared for groups of parents and those prepared for individuals. Those arranged for parents' groups, such as those by the University of North Carolina Extension Division, are usually in the form of statements and questions for discussion, with certain reading assignments.

The National Congress of Parents and Teachers has correspondence courses in Parent-Teacher Organizations. Course G deals with the subject of Public Schools.

Correspondence courses for individuals vary from reading courses to those with questions and lessons, as well as readings. The Institute of Child Welfare, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota, offers two correspondence courses, one in Child Care and Training for Mothers of Children of Pre-school Age, and one in Later Childhood and Adolescence. Each of these contains 16 lessons.

Pennsylvania State College has planned Correspondence Courses in Parent Education. Such courses are conducted also by the Virginia State Board of Health, and the Minnesota Board of Health, both cooperating with the Children's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor.

SUMMARY

Method and content in Parent Education are based on the needs and interests of parents in regard to actual life situations. Instead of the older idea of purveying information, there is substituted a concept of education as a flexible vital process in which every learner is met on the level of his own interests and needs, and in which growth is conceived of in terms of an inner process which affects a re-orientation of the person as a whole.

There are three phases of parent education work, group meetings, individual conferences, and activities in which parents "learn by doing."

Part VI

EDUCATION OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH FOR HOME AND FAMILY LIFE

EDUCATION for family living and parenthood goes on at two points in the educational system on the adult-parent level and with children and young unmarried people. The second type of education has been termed preparental or education for "home and family living." Children and youth at all age levels want help from teachers and educators in the development of sound personalities and in their problems of adjustment to home, school, and the community. Children are not interested in situations which they may face when they become parents, but they are exceedingly interested in questions related to their own daily living. They have the right to expect that education will help them to live happily and constructively both as children and later as adults.

This type of education therefore stresses the broadly human values implicit in the development of a sane well-balanced personality and of a satisfactory adjustment to life. It aims toward wholesome development and sound adult attitudes, irrespective of whether or not the individual eventually marries. It is evident that training which prepares adequately for parenthood will also tend to develop wholesome individuals.

FOR CHILDREN

Education for participation in home and family life begins with the earliest home training of the child in constructive habit formation, in acceptance of desirable routines, and in the development of desirable social responses to other persons in the environment. The nursery school and kindergarten continue the emphasis upon physical and mental health, the development of cooperative attitudes and the stimulation of independence and initiative.

The first years of elementary school take into account the child's increasing comprehension of his immediate surroundings in the neighborhood and community, of the social and productive forces at work there, and of his expanding relationships with other people. In the early years, too, the beginning of an understanding of the scientific bases underlying the environment is made. A growing understanding of the environment, of one's self, and of one's relationships to others and the total social structure is developed through the upper levels of the elementary schools. This program is adapted to the interests and capacities of the children and includes certain health and homemaking functions.

The emergency nursery schools in the public schools of Pennsylvania offer an excellent opportunity for the school children to learn about the educational program for children of pre-school age.

FOR YOUTH

During high school and college years many problems develop which are of immediate concern to the adolescent. Young people are be-

ginning to search for patterns of behavior appropriate to their age and sex, which are adapted to new and changing conditions, and which will at the same time eventuate in a wholesome maturity. The home is not able, unaided to undertake this task of solving for youth its perplexities in respect to living in a modern world. Recreational, social and religious agencies are attempting in part to meet these needs of youth. The school too has a responsibility and an opportunity in helping youth to develop the understanding and ideals essential for continuous and harmonious participation in home and community life both for child and adult.

In accordance with the best educational principles, education for home and family life for the adolescent proceeds from the immediate problems which confront young people, such as their relation to other members of the family, planning and spending the family income, boy-girl relationships, manners, clothing, mores, standards of morality, and planning for a home and marriage. The teacher of social studies and the home economics teacher may develop such a course in co-operation, basing their program on the interests of the young people involved.

In several high schools in Pennsylvania courses in family living are offered to boys and girls. One High School has a course in Home Living for all high school girls. In one county the High Schools provide for separate courses for boys and girls in personal improvement.

An interesting program of Education for Home and Family Life is found in connection with the Vocational Home Economics Work with school girls between the ages of 14 and 18. Through the home projects carried on by the girls, the teacher of Vocational Homemaking visits the homes and in addition to working intensively with the girls, she discusses the work with the mother. In addition to the full-time teachers of Vocational Home Economics, twelve itinerant teachers carry on this work in something over 72 centers in the small rural high schools which would not otherwise be reached. This program results in a better understanding between mothers and daughters, as well as more satisfying relationships within the whole family group.

Many youth agencies, aware of the interests of young people in education for home and family life are attempting to meet this need. Such agencies include the Y. M. C. A., the Girl and Boy Scouts, 4H Clubs, Girl Reserves and Y. W. C. A.

IN THE COLLEGES

Many colleges and institutions of higher learning, in response to requests from students and as a result of surveys made among their graduates, are offering courses on the family, preparation for marriage, human relationships, growth, development and training of the child, and technical aspects of homemaking. More and more home economics departments are stressing the "relationship" aspects of family life, rather than merely the skills and mechanical technics involved in homemaking.

Illustrations of such work may be found in Drexel Institute and Temple University as well as Pennsylvania State College. Nursery Schools are a part of the Home Economics program in these three

institutions. The Home Economics Department of Indiana State Teachers College provides some opportunity for practical experience with young children in a play group.

Colleges are realizing that work of this sort must not continue to be limited to certain small specialized groups, and are offering it more generally to students, both men and women, enrolled in all departments of the college. Orientation courses have been set up to meet this need in part, but there is room for much further expansion in order to meet the needs of all groups of students. As an example Albright College last year conducted a course in "Home and Family Life" in which the men enrolled comprised three-fourths of the class.

The colleges and universities have also undertaken responsibility for offering work on the graduate level for training leaders in this field and for carrying on and stimulating needed research.

Another phase of Education of Young People for Home and Family Life has to do with pre-marriage consultation service. The Philadelphia Marriage Counsel offers this type of service which is designed both for young people and young married couples. A statement of this service reads as follows:

"This service is offered to help young married couples, or those contemplating marriage, to a better understanding of common requisites for a happy and healthy companionship in married life—to help them avoid some of the causes of marital difficulties. It offers an opportunity to young folks to confer frankly and confidentially with a well informed and sympathetic person on questions about which they may be puzzled or afraid or intelligently interested."

The Marriage Counsel also maintains a small reference library which is available to clients who desire to borrow books.

Workers in religious programs, realizing the need for pre-marital consultation are attempting to find ways of providing such services.

Since subject matter in the field of parent education cross-cuts most of the arts and sciences, it follows that not only special courses are needed, but that all teaching should attempt to meet the needs of the individual and to help orient him to life problems. This implies a qualified teaching force trained in a knowledge of child development, family relationships, and principles of mental hygiene. In recognition of the soundness of such a training program, many teacher training institutions are beginning to modify their curricula in terms of these newer emphases.

SUMMARY

Education for home and family life may be thought of as a continuous process throughout life. Children and youth as well as adults need opportunities in which they may learn how to meet their every day problems more adequately. More and more provision is being made to meet these needs of children both in school and through extra-curricular activities. Colleges are also beginning to meet the needs of young people in relation to their interest in human relationships.

Part VII

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APPENDIX

ORGANIZATIONS AND AGENCIES WHICH HAVE EXPRESSED INTEREST IN THE PENNSYLVANIA COUNCIL OF PARENT EDUCATION

*Advisory Council of Parent Teachers Association and St. Luke's Church	York
*American Association of University Women	
*American Friends Service Committee	Philadelphia
*American Legion, Women's Auxiliary	
American Red Cross, Pennsylvania Chapter	
Bucknell University, Institute Family Relationships	Lewisburg
Carnegie Institute	Pittsburgh
Catholic Women's Organization	
Century Club, Scranton, Parent Council	Scranton
*Chester County Schools	West Chester
Child Guidance Clinic	Pittsburgh
*Child Health Council, Lebanon County	Lebanon
*Coatesville Public Schools	Coatesville
*Dauphin County Schools	Harrisburg
Delaware County Public Schools	Media
*Emergency Child Health Committee	Philadelphia
*Falk Elementary School	Pittsburgh
Frick Training School for Teachers	Pittsburgh
International Institute	Philadelphia
Jewish Women's Organizations	
Juniata College	Huntingdon
*Lackawanna County Schools	Scranton
Lehigh Valley Child Helping Foundation	Easton
*National Council of Parent Education	New York City
*Parents Council of Philadelphia	Philadelphia
*Parents Council of Pittsburgh	Pittsburgh
*Pennsylvania Birth Control Federation	Philadelphia
*Pennsylvania Congress of Parents and Teachers	
*Pennsylvania Council of Churches	
Pennsylvania Council on Christian Education	Philadelphia
*Pennsylvania Federation of Women's Clubs	
*Pennsylvania Hospital, Institute of Mental Hygiene	Philadelphia
Pennsylvania League of Women Voters	Philadelphia
*Pennsylvania Mental Hygiene Committee	
Pennsylvania Medical Association, Women's Auxiliary	
Pennsylvania Nurses' Association	York
*Pennsylvania State College	State College
*Pennsylvania State Grange	
Pennsylvania State Sabbath School Association	
Philadelphia Child Guidance Clinic	Philadelphia
Philadelphia Department of Public Health, Division of Child Hygiene	Philadelphia
*Philadelphia Marriage Counsel	Philadelphia
*Philadelphia Public Schools	Philadelphia
*Pittsburgh Public Schools	Pittsburgh
Reading Public Schools	Reading
Society of Friends—Committee on Race Relations	Philadelphia
*State Teachers College	Bloomsburg
State Teachers College	California
Training School for Teachers	Cheyney
State Teachers College	Clarion
State Teachers College	East Stroudsburg
State Teachers College	Edinboro
*State Teachers College	Indiana
State Teachers College	Kutztown

* Organizations which have sent representatives to attend meetings of Pennsylvania Council of Parental Education.

State Teachers College	Lock Haven
State Teachers College	Mansfield
*State Teachers College	Millersville
*State Teachers College	Shippensburg
State Teachers College	Slippery Rock
*State Teachers College	West Chester
State Departments:	Harrisburg
*Department of Health	
*Library	
*Department of Public Instruction	
*Department of Welfare	
*Temple University, Department of Early Childhood and Elementary Education	Philadelphia
*Thiel College	Greenville
*University of Pennsylvania, School of Education	Philadelphia
*University of Pittsburgh	Pittsburgh
*White Williams Foundation	Philadelphia
*Women's Interdenominational Union	Philadelphia